



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BISHOP OPPOSES LIRR TOWER IN SOUTHAMPTON

In Meeting with LIRR, Local Officials, Offers to Help Find Alternative Site

Southampton—Congressman Tim Bishop today sent a letter to Governor George E. Pataki in opposition to a Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) proposal to build a 150-foot communications tower in Southampton Village. In the letter, Bishop informed the Governor about a meeting he held today with LIRR President Dermody and Southampton Mayor Romanosky. In the meeting held in Bishop's Coram district office, he offered to act as a mediator to build the tower in a more suitable location. Bishop, and many members of the community, feel the tower represents a public safety risk. Among the alternatives are: an existing tower at Southampton College, the New York State Department of Transportation site at Shinnecock Hills and a local Cablevision tower, which is nearly twice as tall as the proposed LIRR tower.

"I have personally committed myself to doing everything possible to make arrangements for LIRR to utilize these sites," Bishop said in the letter.

December 22, 2003

Governor George E. Pataki
The State Capitol
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

I am writing to express my deep concern with the proposed site for a Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) communications tower in the Village of Southampton. While I appreciate the necessity of improving the LIRR's communications capability, I believe that LIRR has not sufficiently accounted for the public safety problems this site would cause, nor have they adequately considered alternate locations in their planning process.

As you know, the LIRR has plans to construct a 150-foot tower at the Southampton train station. This proposal has already been litigated and debated extensively, and it has become clear that federal, state, and local authorities do not have authority to block the plan since the train station property is owned by the LIRR. I write this letter as a final appeal, asking that you intervene in this process to ensure that the health and safety of the Southampton community is put before the desire of the LIRR to build a tower at this site.

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The Southampton train station site, located just steps away from an oil storage facility,

invites the possibility of a terrible disaster should the tower fall down. As we recently witnessed in Syracuse, NY, radio towers can fall in storm conditions. Should a tower fall at this confined location, it would be extremely difficult for the police or volunteer fire department to access the site. This would be particularly troubling, considering the close proximity of Our Lady of the Hamptons school and the oil storage facility. Local first responders have expressed grave concern with this site, and it would be irresponsible to proceed without acknowledging their comments.

I am also concerned that LIRR has not adequately explored alternatives to this site. The Village of Southampton came forward with numerous proposals for sites in the area, including an existing tower at Southampton College, the New York State Department of Transportation site at Shinnecock Hills and a local Cablevision tower, which is twice as tall as the proposed LIRR tower. Not only would these sites pose no danger to the public, but they also sit at natural elevations above the site in the Village, which would enhance the effectiveness of the Tower's signal.

After meeting with LIRR President Dermody, I have personally committed myself to doing everything possible to make arrangements for LIRR to utilize these sites. Should none of these sites work out, I am certain that LIRR could find a different location in the region, considering the broad geographic area that the proposed tower is expected to serve.

Thank you again for your consideration of my concerns. I look forward to working with you going forward, to develop a solution that meets the LIRR's needs, while ensuring the safety of Southampton residents.

Sincerely,

Timothy H. Bishop
Member of Congress

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